In spite of the moderate number of hold-overs from the old economic system, the economic base of modern Washo life has changed considerably since the 1850's. Today, the Washo live primarily through wage work on surrounding ranches and in the towns. The men are mainly unskilled laborers, although a few have trades and earn a good living. One man has grown wealthy in the lumber business. Women work as domestic servants, as dishwashers in restaurants, or in laundries. But women do not work unless they must, and they spend most of their time at home caring for their families. Most of the aboriginal survivals are in the female sphere of activity, for women can add considerably to the family income by preparing pine-nut and acorn flour and by weaving baskets for sale. The older people have pensions or receive social security payments and are economically independent of their children. Washo material culture is entirely American except for the items mentioned above and a few others. They now live in permanent settlements resembling small American towns. The largest of these, Dresslerville, Nevada, has a population of 195. This is far larger than the number of individuals who lived together in prewhite settlements.

CEREMONIES OF THE LIFE CYCLE

A number of practices were formerly associated with childbirth. The mother ate no meat or salt for a month after the birth; the father observed the same taboos until the baby's umbilical cord fell off; and until the loss of the cord, husband and wife were forbidden sexual intercourse. Ceremonies involving the distribution of gifts marked the return of the father and mother to normal life, the former when the infant lost its umbilical cord and the latter a month after the birth.

Most of the customs surrounding birth are no longer observed. Some women still observe the food taboos; but if they have their babies in the government hospital, they generally eat meat when it is served. Often the doctors and nurses insist upon it. The men have given up all their previous observances. The custom of distributing presents following the birth of a baby is still maintained. It usually takes place two weeks after the birth and seems to be a merging of two aboriginal ceremonies: the one at the time of the detachment of the umbilical cord, and the second, when the mother is freed of all restrictions a month after the birth. The modern ceremony is called the "baby feast."

The girl's puberty rite or "dance," as the Washo call it, was the most elaborate of all the ceremonies of the life cycle. It lasted four days, and the Washo say that during this period the girl was "shaping her life." The principal features of the ceremony were: (1) the girl fasted four days and abstained from meat and fish for one month; (2) she worked very hard so as not to be lazy in later life; (3) on the fourth night, the girl climbed a mountain where she lit four fires; (4) she then raced a nonrelative back to the foot of the mountain, care being taken that she always won the race; (5) the girl danced until dawn on the fourth night of the ceremony and was then bathed. The entire ceremony was repeated when the girl had her second menses.

The puberty ceremony for girls is still held. In my interviewing, I have found very few women who had not had a "dance." Each woman who had not had a